

shrinkage and allowing their joining faces to be in contact with each other or to be closely placed, and
sintering the parts to join them at the joining faces.

2. (amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein the joining of said at least two premolded parts at the joining faces is carried out without the application of an external pressure.

3. (twice amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein each of said at least two premolded parts has a coefficient of thermal shrinkage in the range between 0.2 and 10 %, and the difference in the coefficient of thermal shrinkage between two premolded parts which are adjacently placed ranges from 0.2 to 9.8 %.

4. (twice amended) A method according to claim 1, wherein at least one premolded part is surrounded by another premolded part having a larger coefficient of thermal shrinkage than that of [at least one] the premolded part which it surrounds.

REMARKS

This is in response to the final Office Action that was mailed October 3, 2001. Claim 1 is amended in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions for overcoming the rejection of claims